



Suddenly They Found Themselves in the Midst of the Half-Feral Creatures of the Range

# LUCK OF THE PATHFINDER

Drawings by Frank Tenney Johnson

BY ELMORE ELLIOTT PEAKE

**T**HE cologne-scented clerk at the Long Horn House knew nothing of Jesse Bland except that he drove an automobile between Drybone and the new gold fields in the Bittersweet Valley. He conjectured, of course, that the young man was one of the Eastern exiles who constituted a majority of Drybone's population, finding the Arizona climate more salubrious, for one reason or another, than that of their native heath. But this did not deter Curly from recommending Bland to Miss Josephine Maxim as a proper person to drive her over to Manzanita Canyon on a botanizing quest.

Bland chugged up to the pea-green, orange-curtained façade of the hotel at four-thirty A. M., almost before the feverish night life of the little, unfenced, unpainted, treeless Babylon had collapsed into sodden sleep. He admired the type of woman whose enthusiasm for flowers would appoint such an hour. But if he noticed the crisp, athletic beauty of the girl who promptly emerged from the hotel and seated herself at his side instead of in the tonneau, he gave no sign. She was the daughter of Major Granville Maxim, western general superintendent of the A., P. & O. Railroad, while he was—well, he was her driver at present. What he had been or might yet be did not count—in Drybone.

With Western freedom she whiled away mile after mile of featureless plain with a charming flow of conversation, wholly unabashed by Jesse's taciturnity. On arriving at the mouth of the canyon, the limit of wheels, she invited him to accompany her; but he pretended that his car needed tuning up. On returning to share her lunch with him, about ten o'clock, and finding his kit of tools still spread out on a rug, she did not repeat her invitation, but again fared forth alone with her trowel and vasculum.

On their next trip, however, Bland shared her tramp—as a spectator. The third time out he volunteered to climb the canyon walls to promising looking ledges; though aware that she was quite capable of doing it herself. After that—for the botanizing continued throughout the early Arizona spring—she equipped him with a vasculum and trowel of his own.

He collected indiscriminately, and naturally most of his specimens were worthless, having already found a place in Josephine's herbarium. But now and then he made a find worth while, and one day he brought in a tiny plant with little, star-shaped blue blossoms that drew a cry of delight from her lips.

"Houstonia," she cried, scanning it sharply, "but just

the like of which I've never seen before! If it proves a new species, it shall be christened *Blandii*, and your name shall be more imperishable than if graven in marble."

"Then don't do it," he answered in his whimsical way; "for the sooner my name perishes from the earth the better."

She eyed him with frank interest. "Tell me all about it, Mr. Bland. I know there is something to tell."

But he only smiled and shook his head.

**C**UT off from the society of other women, it was natural, perhaps inevitable, that he should begin to love this rare girl,—frank and unconventional without indelicacy, intensely feminine without apparent sex consciousness. He guarded his secret, though, like leprosy. Then came the day when, having been delayed four hours by a deranged differential, they trundled homeward in the dark, running slowly across the pathless plain, with ghostly boulders and clumps of sage leaping in and out of the oscillating flare of the headlights.

Suddenly they found themselves in the midst of a herd of cattle,—not the docile Brindles and Bossies of the barnyard, but the half-feral creatures of the range, wild-eyed, bellowing, panicky beasts which pawed the earth, tossed their heads, and clicked their long, cruel horns together.

"They won't hurt us," said Bland soothingly, advancing the car at a snail's pace and gently, very gently, elbowing the stupid cattle aside.

He knew that a stampede meant death; and Josephine apparently knew it too, for she gripped his arm and pressed close to his side. The uproar and smother, the fetid animal smell, the rolling, frenzied eyes, the blood-red slaving mouths,—these were the elements for a hellish nightmare. Yet, in the thick of it all, Bland's senses swooned in the delicate essence from the girl's hair and her quick, warm breath on his cheek.

He passed an arm about her. Under the star-dusted canvas of the heavens, and in that vast amphitheater of space, the battleground of Nature's elemental forces, where man is but a mote borne upon the cosmic gale, the act was as natural and involuntary as lifting one's hand to avert a blow.

Finally they reached the edge of the living vortex.

"You are a brave man—Jesse!" she whispered fervently.

He peered into her shadowy, upturned face. Her eyes glowed phosphorescently and her lips seemed to

invite his kiss. For a moment he fluttered between desire and resolution. Then he withdrew his arm.

"I'm not brave," he answered almost sternly. "I'm a coward. After what has happened it is your due to know it. I'll tell you the story,—it's short,—and you may judge for yourself.

**I**'M a locomotive engineer, as my father was. I loved the trade, and when I was awarded a berth, at the age of twenty-eight, on the Georgia Western's Cotton Queen, no prouder man lived; for the next youngest runner on the train was forty-three.

"But the Queen was too fast for sixty-five-pound rails and the grades and curves that had served a former generation. On my first trip out I threw a tender truck. Returning, the baggage car was derailed. A week later a spreading rail let the whole train into the ditch, and my fireman and two passengers lost their lives.

"It was not my fault; but I began to lose confidence in myself. Next came a series of accidents that might have happened with the slowest train in the world. A woman slipped on an icy crossing, and I stopped a bare five feet from her body. The next day I killed a horse; though without hurting the aged couple in the buggy. A week later a little girl, trundling a hoop, escaped as by a miracle, losing half her clothing.

"The Fear got me. I couldn't sleep. My cab became a chamber of horrors. I resigned and came West. I wanted to get away from everybody who knew me. For nearly a year I fired freight on this Gila River division, living in Tehachapi. I could do that all right; for the engineer shouldered the responsibility, and responsibility was the ghost that haunted me. I even dreaded taking the engine to and from the roundhouse, and always ran so slow that the boys began to joke about it. Then, backing down the yards one night, I cut off a little boy's leg. I can hear his pitiful wail yet, sometimes in my dreams, and it starts the sweat. I forswore the cab forever, and moved over to Drybone to get away from the boys at Tehachapi."

An interval of silence followed. They topped a swell of ground, and the masthead electrics in the railroad yard at Drybone swam into view.

"Fight it out, Jesse, fight it out!" said Josephine earnestly.

"I have fought it—God knows I've fought it!" he answered bitterly. "It's in the blood. The same thing happened to my father. I remember when he made his two hundred and a quarter a month, doubling a seventy-mile run. Then the Fear got him, and he died the jani-



tor of division headquarters at fifty dollars a month. I'll be lucky to make as good a finish."

"Don't say it! Don't say it!" she beseeched of him. "You must kill that serpent, or it will rear its ugly head in whatever path of life you choose. You can kill it—I'll help you kill it!"

**MAJOR MAXIM**, engaged in the onerous task of welding the recently purchased trans-Mississippi short lines into a transcontinental system (the A., P. & O. already owning its own rails from New York to Fort Worth), was a very busy man. He ate, slept, and worked to the rhythmic drumming of his service car's wheels, with such brief, uncertain pauses at Drybone, his ostensible headquarters, that Jesse Bland had only the slightest acquaintance with him.

Yet it developed that the major was not too busy to keep one eye on his motherless daughter; for, the second day after her memorable night ride, Curly, the clerk at the desk of the Long Horn, observed to Jesse:

"I'll put you wise to something, old scout. Major Maxim has shut down on Josie taking any more trips with you. He blew in night before last about ten o'clock, and when he found that Josie was still out he began to boil. I overheard them having it out at the breakfast table yesterday morning. He's sent her over to Tehachapi to visit Superintendent Carey's family. She left on Six this morning. But, by jockies, Jesse! the way that girl put on the mitts for you would have made you spread out like a peacock! Stay in the game, old scout! She's the biggest catch in the Southwest."

Bland, both hurt and angry at this information, drove his car aimlessly about the streets for a week, avoiding rather than seeking business, and half expecting Josephine to write. Then one afternoon, in the wake of Drybone's most prominent citizens, he strolled down to the railroad station to greet the Pathfinder, the A., P. & O.'s four-day train from San Diego to New York, now on her maiden trip.

Almost the first man he saw on the platform was Major Maxim, carrying a small handbag. In avoiding him Bland bumped into the station operator.

"Heard the news?" the youth asked eagerly. "Miss Maxim was kidnapped about an hour ago by the Frontana gang, while riding horseback over at Tehachapi, and is held for ransom. Guess the old man there is glad he's got a streak of greased lightning like the Pathfinder to take him across."

The splendid train was then drawing in, on time to the second. During the five or six minutes required to change her engine and crew Bland stood in a kind of stupor. Then, after she began to move, he glanced at the money in his pocket to see if he had the fare to

Tehachapi and jumped aboard. He intended to volunteer as a deputy in the hazardous work of running down the bandits. He also intended that Maxim should know nothing about it.

**THE** Pathfinder had been humming along for an hour or more, when suddenly she shuddered as with a chill. A little girl playing in the aisle near Bland was thrown to the floor; a man in the opposite section was shot into the lap of his vis-à-vis; women screamed; and someone shouted, "We're off the track!"

Jesse Bland knew, however, that the commotion was due to an emergency stop, and he darted for the door. He was the first passenger to reach the front; Major Maxim was the second.

Less than a yard from the locomotive's pilot, in the center of the track, lay a boulder that had slid down the face of a small mesa on the left. Both engineer and fireman had jumped, and both lay where they had struck, —one white and unconscious, the other writhing and groaning from what proved to be a broken leg.

Maxim shook his head, half-pityingly, half-censoriously. "Too bad! An error of judgment based on a lack of nerve. Rig up a stretcher," he commanded of the baggageman, "get those injured men into your car, and call the train for a doctor. One of you brakemen cut a wire, so I can attach my pocket set of instruments and get in communication with Drybone. Meanwhile," addressing the throng of passengers, "you can help out by tackling that boulder. You'll probably find a rope and crowbar in the baggage car."

He glanced at his watch, and continued to the conductor, "Laying aside my anxiety to reach Tehachapi, I wouldn't have had this happen for five thousand dollars. This is my train. It was my work of rehabilitation on these jerkwater mountain and desert lines that made her possible. I suggested her—I named her—I guaranteed her. I bought twelve new locomotives to haul her. I spent ten thousand dollars in advertising her. Now here, on her first run, she basks under an Arizona sun, as torpid as a Gila monster. That engine crew from Drybone can't possibly reach us under two hours, and if they have to trail that freight very far that we passed on Yucca Siding—" He broke off despairingly and snapped his watch shut.

Bland was about to step forward to help remove the boulder when—as it seemed to him afterward—an invisible presence plucked at his sleeve and a voice of supernal sweetness whispered in his ear, "Now is the accepted time! Remember, I promised to help you!"

He lifted his eyes to the mighty hulk of iron and steel that towered above him,—that marvelous steed to whom night and day were as one, who annihilated time,

devoured space, tossed the tempest upon her iron horn, defied heat and cold, nosed aside rain and snow, a steed upon whose haunch a man weighed light as thistledown, and yet to whose closing hand or flexing arm she yielded instant obedience.

His heart quickened, the blood flew to his face, and he heard himself saying in a remote, unfamiliar voice, "Major Maxim, I can pull this train through to Tehachapi."

**THE** general superintendent whirled about and transfixed the speaker upon a humorous, half-contemptuous glance.

"You! An automobile is your tool, isn't it?"

"Yes; but I'm also a locomotive engineer."

Maxim studied the young man a moment, incredulously, but with the gleam of hope that a drowning man casts at a straw. "What were you discharged for?" he asked.

"I wasn't discharged. I resigned."

"May I ask why?"

Bland hesitated. But in that exalted moment a lie would have been pollution. "I lost my nerve," he answered steadily.

The confession seemed to catch Maxim's fancy. "Yet you volunteer to pull one of the fastest trains in America, across a stretch of the devil's own country, and that without knowing the track!"

"I know the track. I fired freight over this division for a year, and I'll pull this train into Tehachapi on time if you'll give me the chance."

Again Maxim's fancy was caught, this time by the young man's lips, set tight as the jaws of a steel trap, and a metallic hardness of eye. "By heavens, Bland! I'll accept your challenge. But, mark you, I'll ride in the cab, where I can keep an eye on you. Yes, and I'll fire too!" he added exuberantly, stripping off his coat.

"Firing's a man's job," suggested Bland.

"And I'm a man," retorted the official. "Besides, I don't suppose there's anyone else on this train who knows how to steam an engine."

He recalled the brakeman who was shinning up a nearby telegraph pole. He stepped to the baggage car door and asked for the caps and blouses of the injured men. He slipped on one set and handed the other to Bland. Then he started for the boulder, which, as solid as a chunk of iron ore, was successfully resisting the attack of the passengers.

"One minute, Major," interposed Bland. "I don't object to your firing. I'm glad to have you, for that matter. But an engineer is supreme in his cab. It's no child's play to haul this train through on better than schedule time. If anything happens the law will hold me, not you, responsible. Is that understood?"

Maxim eyed him searchingly, half suspiciously, for an instant; then, smiling, he answered with his first show of cordiality, "Now I know you're an engineer. I accept your stipulation."

**THE** boulder was finally shunted down the embankment, and the passengers warned aboard. Jesse, followed by Maxim, clambered up the gangway ladder and spent half a minute familiarizing himself with the intricate system of controls, the herculean six-driver being a type he had never driven. Then, throwing the reversing lever forward and easing off the brakes, he laid a steady hand upon the throttle. The long, glistening line of Pullmans began to move as gently as if propelled by the breath of a zephyr.

Inching out the throttle and notching up the reverse to shorten the valve motion in the steam chest,—“cutting off for speed,” in the vernacular,—he forced the Pathfinder into a faster and faster pace, until, dropping over the rim of the great Barren Basin, she sped down the straight, gentle gradient like a projectile fired from a colossal gun.

The telegraph poles, stretching endlessly ahead, weaved and reeled weirdly in their swift and threatening advance, and flitted past the cab window like spectral exclamation points of Brobdingnagian size, while the sagging webs of wire between rose and fell, with the regular stroke of a wing.

Behind, the red, impalpable dust was sucked up in a vortical, writhing cloud, forming a comet whose head was chained to the observation platform, but whose cone-shaped tail rose higher and higher from earth until it proclaimed the passing of the Pathfinder to the desolate mining camps in the Lesser Magdalenes, thirty miles to the north.

The locomotive, scarcely pressing the rails laterally on this straightaway stretch, ran as steadily as a spinning top, with a slow, gradual declination and recover, real or apparent, now to one side, now to the other. Except for the hoarse, continuous roar of the exhaust and the throb and chatter of revolving and reciprocating parts, a novice would not have suspected her of reeling off better than ninety miles an hour.

But at the first curve, long and gentle as it was, she stiffened throughout her forged and riveted frame, creaked, groaned, and snapped, and chafed within the narrow limits of the gage, while her wheels bit and snarled at the outer rails as if trying to rip them from the ties. Then, striking a tangent again, like a fretful child presented with a sugarplum, her docility returned; the rebellious notes died away and gave place to the regular refrain of the drivers' hammer blows upon the rails and the hoarse diapason of exhausted steam.

Meanwhile Jesse hung his head out of the window and hearkened as a physician hearkens to the respiration or heartbeat of a patient. It was like listening, one would have thought, for the shifting of a pebble amid Niagara's tumult. Yet in reality the mechanical pandemonium was a symphony, and the singing of a loose nut or the chitter of a broken part would have impinged upon his ear like a false note.

Marvelous and flightlike as was the speed of the train,



Her Great Body Pitched and Tossed as if Floundering in Quicksand.



however, the engineer had only to lift his eyes to the distant horizons or the snow-capped peaks of the Greater Magdalenes to lose all sense of translation, to feel like a squirrel within the whirling but unadvancing wheel of its cage. The mountains were keeping equal pace, apparently, with the train; the parallax of the immobile horizon was too small for human vision to measure it. For the West yields reluctantly to puny man. Just as its geological Past dwarfs his calendar to the insignificance of an hourglass, so its sublime distances belittle his mechanical devices into toys, looking with the same immovable calm upon his speediest machines and the burrowing mole.

At last, however, after three hours, the bottom of the Basin was reached, and the train glided out on a long, serpentine section built to foil the shifting bed of the Spirit River. For fifty minutes she circled about, like a hunter lost in the wilderness, the Magdalenes now on the north, now on the south, now in front, now be-

hind. Then, as if marshaling her reserve strength, she dashed for the short, reverse curves of the Washboard.

On this trying bit of road the iron racehorse might have been spared, it would seem, from pecuniary if not prudential considerations—to save her from a premature consignment to the scrapheap. But she, like her prototype of flesh and blood, was born a sacrificial offering to the God of Time. A fast and short life was her destiny. The man at the helm, straining inflamed eyes ahead, with lips shut tight against the stinging sand and face twisted awry to foil the terrific suction that tugged at his breath, strained out a drop of mercy, it is true, by easing the throttle an inch or two.

Nevertheless, she struck the first curve with an impact that made her scream like a wounded catamount. Her flanges shrieked. Her great body pitched and tossed as if floundering in quicksand. Straining at her rigid tendons and fighting the steel bands with her flying round feet, she set up a demoniac clang of metal

against metal. She buckled, jolted, jarred. She threatened to leap the track, to bury herself in the ditch, to somersault, to launch into the air like a winged dragon. Finally the bell, catching the motion, began to toll. And still her master drove the seething steam, like a maddening drug, into her great, cylindrical hearts.

Granville Maxim was not the man to cry for quarter. Yet finally he staggered across the lurching cab, his face streaming with sooty sweat.

"Aren't you crowding her a bit?" he shouted into Bland's ear.

Jesse jerked a curt negative with his head. "Not if we're to get into Tehachapi on time—and we are!"

He nodded toward the steam gage, which had fallen a few pounds below pressure. Maxim, taking the hint, opened the door into the engine's incandescent vitals and seized his scoop.

In the cars behind were perhaps a hundred passengers,

*Continued on page 18*

# PINCKNEY FOLLOWS A HUNCH

Drawings by F. Vaux Wilson

BY SEWELL FORD

**Y**OU might know it was all due to some batty hunch of Pinckney's. I'd have come back by train if it hadn't been for him. But no, he has to get a sudden notion that it would be a brilliant thing to drive three hundred miles or so, just for a slice or two of bacon. The fact that we're up in the Berkshires, where he's helpin' Aunty entertain a house party, don't seem to bother him at all.

"You simp!" says I. "Ain't you got enough bacon here?"

"Not Irish bacon," says he. "You can get that only at the club. Maurice told me it would be in today, and I had ordered a pair of squab broiled in it for luncheon. So you see I must go."

"Of all the boobs!" says I. "Say, you don't think you can make Fifth-ave. from here by lunchtime in that car of yours, do you?"

"That's so," says he. "I'll wire Maurice to hold them for dinner—four, if you're coming. Then I can take the midnight up and send Herman back alone with the car. Come on, let's start now."

Course there ain't any use arguin' with Pinckney when he gets one of them wild schemes in his head; and if he's bound to do it I might's well have the fun of the trip too, for there's no denyin' that in these fits he's apt to be mighty entertainin' comp'ny. About as serious in such moods, Pinckney is, as a kitten chasin' its tail, and as steady in his plans as a butterfly on the wing.

I expect there's the same streak in most of us; only we don't all have the chance to cut loose. It's catchin', anyway; for I know when I see that sparkle in his eye, and that careless lift to his chin, and he gives me the word to follow along—well, I gen'rally drops things and goes.

So inside of ten minutes we're under way, breezin' down the long hill that leads into Lenox, with Pinckney stretched careless in one corner of the limousine and the cool mornin' air rushin' in through the windows.

It's some car *de luxe* that Pinckney does his tourin' in.—one of these roomy, long-bodied outfits, with silver side lamps, cutglass flower holders, and gray broadcloth upholstery. And, say, that kind of travelin' has got railroadin' beat seven ways for payday; that is, if you can stand the tariff. And Pinckney can. Since he acquired this new six-cylinder, ninety-horse aggregation, with Herman to drive it, he's been like a hummin'bird with an extra set of wings. He used to do some flittin' around in taxis, you know; but nothin' to what he does now. I've known him to start for the club, six blocks off, change his mind on the way up, and land in Newport before he stopped. Lucky his car has a thirty-gallon pressure tank on behind.

Also it's lucky he's got Herman; for what Pinckney don't know about an automobile is amazin'. He's wise to the difference between the dash clock and the speedometer only because he can tell time by one; but he's always mixin' up the transmission and the carburetor, and I believe he thinks they keep the differential in the battery box on the runnin' board. But Herman, he can shift a forty-by-five-and-a-half shoe while Pinckney's consumin' one cigarette, and such simple things as takin' down the magneto or grindin' the valves he can almost do durin' a luncheon stop.

One of these thick-necked, blank-faced Swiss marvels, Herman is; half German, half French; as reliable as a gov'ment time ball, and as honest as an addin' machine. When he gets a chance to eat or sleep I never could figure out; for he's always ready, either to wait four hours at the curb, or to start for a two-hundred-mile run at a minute's notice. He seems to know every fork and turn between Columbus Circle and Poland Springs, and I think he can scent a new stretch of State highway across two counties.

All of which Pinckney takes as a matter of course, givin' his orders careless, and steppin' into his car like

"I Would Make  
My Welcome Rich."



he'd stroll into a Pullman, expectin' to be landed at Newport, or Tuxedo, or wherever he's bound, on schedule time. And Herman always turns the trick.

**T**HIS ride down into Connecticut was a sample; for Pinckney'd suggested the shore route home for sake of variety, not takin' the extra seventy-five miles or so it would mean into account at all. So we bowls along, touchin' fifty on the open stretches, slowin' down some through the towns; but with never a hitch or a stop, and all so smooth you might have shaved yourself. Yes, we'd been tearin' off the distance in large chunks, and it looked like we'd beat our own timecard, when Pinckney has to indulge in the luxury of havin' another new thought. All of a sudden he rouses up and whistles through the tube to Herman.

"Oh, I say," says he, "take us around by way of Quatucket."

Herman promptly throttles down and turns around puzzled. "Quatucket, Sir?" says he.

"Oh, come now, Herman!" says Pinckney. "Don't tell me that you don't know where Quatucket is?"

Herman only shakes his head. "Well, then," goes on Pinckney, "it's on the shore somewhere beyond Bridgeport. You take the third left after you pass some absurd little place—Winsted, that's it."

"Yes, Sir," says Herman, gettin' under way again.

"Why go to Quatucket, though?" says I.

"It's a cute name, for one thing," says Pinckney. "Then there's an old little inn there,—Billy Bowles was telling me of it,—a ripping place for luncheon, you know. We'll have some roast duckling there—somehow that seems to go with Quatucket, doesn't it?"

"Say, what would you order at Islip—straw'ry sherbet?" says I. "I know what it would be at Rye; an omelet at Egg Harbor, a Bronx cocktail at East Orange, and a box of coughdrops at Hackettstown, eh? That's a great system of yours."

"Why, so it is, isn't it?" says Pinckney, rubbin' his chin thoughtful.

I'll bet he was plannin' out a new kind of tour on that basis, one he could spring on his chappy friends, and I expect he'd most forgotten about Quatucket, when Herman slows up again.

"Well, what's the matter?" asks Pinckney.

"Here's the third left, Sir," says Herman; "but it is one difficult road, quite difficult. You see, Sir?"

Yes, it looks all of that; just a narrow country road, with deep ruts, and mud holes and rocks sprinkled thick.

"Nonsense!" says Pinckney. "What of it?"

"Very rough going, Sir," says Herman. "This road is not given on the maps. We lose much time, Sir."

"To lose time, Herman," says Pinckney, "is one of my profound desires. Another is to explore the unique, the romantic. You, Herman, have no romance in your soul. You have only cogwheels in your head, lubricating oil in your veins. I know; for I've watched you these many months. But for me Quatucket represents romance. I wish to be taken there at all hazards."

"Yes, Sir," says Herman.

He don't even sigh as he turns off the smooth macadam and heads the machine into this double cowpath. But he was dead right about the rough goin'. Even pneumatic shock absorbers couldn't take care of bumps like them, and that heavy limousine body goes swayin' and staggerin' along, like a dump scow plugin' through a northeaster off Sandy Hook. First we'd go up until the axle straps straightened out with a snap, and then we'd come down solid on the rubber bumpers. It was a case of bracin' yourself to keep from bein' thrown through the roof.

"Say, Pinckney," says I, "what was it your friend Bowles did this in, an airship?"

"Dear, no!" says he. "Come to think of it, I believe Billy said he stopped there in a yacht. That's it! And they drove him in to the station next morning in a buckboard. But it's all the more interesting, going in by machine, isn't it?"

"Almost as fascinatin'," says I, "as bein' rolled down hill in a barrel. Bet you we break a spring before we ever see Quatucket!"

**I** WAS wrong. It was a steerin' knuckle; and if the wheels hadn't been so deep in the ruts we'd have turned turtle as well. When we piles out to see what's the damage we finds Herman inspectin' the break dismal.

"But the other side is all right," says Pinckney. "Can't you steer with that?"

Herman explains that he can't. It seems to be a bad of his that he's got to have both front wheels under control. He says if he can find a blacksmith shop maybe he can fix things up, and I suggests that while he's gettin' off the broken knuckle we go out and scout for smoke.

Course, we was about seven miles from nowhere just then; but Pinckney and I starts to hoof it down the road, me givin' him some of my ideas on romance as we goes along. That don't disturb Pinckney a bit. He says he's havin' the time of his life; always had wanted to stroll around in the real country. It was so restful and inspirin', watchin' the bees build their nests and listenin' to the frogs singin' in the treetops. And him, with his patent leather pumps and his silver-headed stick, pickin' his way around mud puddles, or stoppin' to brush a dandelion blow off his coat sleeve!

We'd gone about a mile when I discovers a side path leading off towards the shore, and by explorin' that we comes to an odd lookin' shack bungalow, with climbin' roses over the front door and flower boxes on the windowsills. It seems to be built mainly of culls and tarred buildin' paper; but everything around it is neat and tidy.

"Somebody's chicken ranch, judgin' by the pens back there," says I. "Let's see if anyone besides the roosters is at home."

**A**T that I raps loud and sings out. What I was expectin' was some yap in overalls and a wide-brimmed straw hat; but instead of that out steps this dapper little old gent wearin' black velvet trousers, a soft white shirt with a low collar, and a flowin' black tie. In place of a hoe, hanged if he ain't got an artist's paint board hung on his left thumb and a couple of brushes



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summer I received my seat on the Stock Exchange as a slight testimonial of gratitude and friendship from my chief. If I disposed of it afterward at an advanced figure, and if I took advantage also of my position as confidential secretary to put into practical use the many tips on Wall Street operations—well, these are other stories. The Blinns did not need my active services after their second Newport season, and I was not anxious to continue with them in that capacity; but I always remained a friendly adviser of the family. The boys went to Harvard, and made their own careers, and if possible strengthened the position of their parents.

**COULD** there be another Blinn campaign at Newport? Decidedly, no!

The conditions are as utterly changed now in that city by the sea as they were in the process of revolution, when first I promoted the Blinns. Newport is still Newport, with many more magnificent palaces, with a quicker pace in its summer whirl, with a more lavish display, and with an army of climbers and aspirants and race to the swift for the goal. It is whispered that half of its splendid establishments are on the market, and that owners keep up a semblance of a season by entertaining for a few weeks, in the hope of getting some new people who will come in and be induced to take these

monumental cormorants off their hands. I do not know but the chances for ultimate success in New York after a season or more there are few. Perhaps the game is not worth the candle.

And perhaps in reviewing this little story of the Blinn social aspirations and their fulfillment it would be better to emphasize those points in the narrative that reveal the crux of the situation.

Personally Blinn did not care for society. But he had acquired a position in the financial world, and he wanted for his wife and his daughter and his sons the best that could be obtained. You see what I mean. It is the American spirit. Then such a position was a valuable asset.

Once he said to me, the only time at which he really threw any light upon his motives, that he came of the third and not the second generation. His father had been a wealthy man; but had lost his money. "I want to prove," he said, "the fallacy of the old saying about the return to shirt sleeves."

As we have not yet acquired the poise of the European, who knows how to be idle and yet be accomplishing something, we have to turn our attention to the acquisition of more power, higher position, now that we have wealth. We are no more the idle rich.

This is only an experience. It was done, and it is not fiction.

## LUCK OF THE PATHFINDER

Continued from page 5

—eating, drinking, smoking, playing cards, reading magazines,—almost as comfortable as if in their drawing rooms at home. Seated on shock-absorbing springs and upholstery, some of the wise ones probably questioned the Pathfinder's vaunted speed. In any event, danger was farthest from their thoughts; for their imagination had subconsciously imbued the system, with its hundreds of millions of capital, with a sanctity far beyond the vulgar reach of a rotten tie or a defective rail.

But the point of that flying wedge of steel was a very different place. It was lonely,—lonely because of the human cargo intrusted to one head, one heart, one pair of hands, lonely because, while the barred tongue of the fire-eating behemoth licked up space like some monstrous, mythological hound in hot chase, the driver knew that the system, in spite of its army of employees, was as helpless to aid him as if his way lay among the dead craters and waterless seas of the moon. At the best his only dependence was a few beardless boys called operators, who could play more or less skilfully with enchained lightning, or a lonely switchman here and there, with the keys of Life or Death in his pocket, according as he was drunk or sober, awake or asleep.

It was lonely too because of the scanty signs of man or his handiwork. Occasionally an adobe Indian village swirled by in a kaleidoscopic jumble. Occasionally a blanketed redskin marked the summit of a knoll like a statue. At long intervals a siding leaped into view, spun alongside for half a minute, and vanished. Sometimes a speck far ahead slowly grew into an operator's tiny box and a watertank.

But all between was a gray waste, and when Bland lifted his hot eyes to the distance for relief nothing had changed. The mountain peaks had not visibly shifted; the gaps between them had neither narrowed nor widened; the vast horizons were no nearer; and the Little Ten Pins, in whose bosom Tehachapi nestled, seemed ever to recede, like a will-o'-the-wisp.

**THE** first and only stop was at White Pigeon, for coal and water. The train ran in without sound of whistle or bell; for the whole population—operator, pumping engineer, his wife and three children—were gathered in plain sight, waiting for the Pathfinder; and as the huge locomotive halted near them with throbbing air pump their eyes glistened with pride. In a sense, she was theirs.

Maxim mounted the tender to haul down the spout of the tank, and Bland, shaking the cramps out of his legs, descended to the ground with an oiler in his hands.

"Any orders?" he asked the operator, a young man whom the desert's lidless, solar eye and oven breath had baked to a leathern hue.

The latter shook his head. "I've got a message for Major Maxim, though, about his daughter. Nothing doing."

Jesse abruptly turned to his engine and blindly jabbed the long nose of his oiler at the bearings through a blur of tears.

Maxim stood with the message in his hand when the engineer reentered the cab.

"I don't believe, I told you, Bland, that

my daughter had been kidnapped," he said huskily.

"I heard it at Drybone—I'm very sorry," answered Jesse, leaning out of the window and nodding to Billings the conductor.

The 209 slowly moved her wheels, as if stiff and sore, emitted a raucous, stentorian cough, a second one, then another and another, at shorter and shorter intervals, until finally they fused into a continuous roar, and once more the Pathfinder was flying eastward. When Bland glanced backward the motionless little group at the telegraph station was blending with the buildings, and soon the watertank itself shrank to a mere dot against the skyline and then melted into invisibility.

The train had lost thirty minutes through her mishap with the boulder. Jesse had made up fifteen, and when he struck the sixty-mile wide esplanade of the Little Ten Pins he made up his mind to gather in the other fifteen, if it was humanly possible. He shouted his intention to Maxim, who leaped to his arduous task of feeding the ravenous maw; then, alternately coaxing and goading, now tossing her half a pipe of sand, now taking up his reverse a notch, he quickly had the locomotive straining to her work. In a few minutes, quivering from the terrific energy stored within, and as if maddened by her driver's increasing demands, she was shooting through the sunset splendor like an arrow from a cyclopean bow.

For twelve miles the finger of the speed-recorder trembled between 103 and 109—shot up to 113—slowly declined to 99. Bland did not glance at the instrument: like most engineers, he preferred his own estimate; for speed is relative, not absolute. But Maxim, swaying like a drunken man,—for the cab had now acquired a peculiar, undulating motion, like a thing in flight,—glued his eyes to the dial.

At the 113 spurt his face paled; but he made no demur this time: merely shot an admiring glance at the humped, tense figure on the engineer's seat, one hand on the throttle, one leg braced against the quadrant.

The hand on the throttle presently shifted, and a cone of white light leaped from the electric headlamp. At once a goblin dance began ahead. Every familiar object put on a mask, stuck on a shadow tail ten or twenty times its height, magnified its size, and curiously shifted from side to side in its swift advance. Once a bulky form, straddling the track, leaped into view like a jack-in-the-box. It looked like a boulder; but it was too late for the brakes, too late to jump, too late for more than an ejaculatory prayer.

Bland instinctively closed his eyes for the crash into eternity. But no crash came, no jar even; and when he opened his eyes a desiccated tumbleweed was clinging to his breast,—a fragment of the heap that some wandering "dust devil" had deposited on the track. He smiled. There was still a constriction about his throat and chest; but the old Fear, turning his blood to water, had not attempted to seize him.

An hour passed. There were no signals to scrutinize, no crossings to whistle for, nothing to be watched except the rails forever shooting beneath the engine like quivering, endless belts. Hence a kind of coziness, even drowsiness, fell over Bland. The

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hammer of the wheels, the beat of metal against metal, the creaking of the cab, and the rush of steam,—these sank into his subconsciousness. The opening of the feed door scarcely disturbed him, and the red flare from the firebox, transforming the driving smoke and steam above the tender into a lurid scud, ceased to impress his eye.

What he did see, in the massed blackness beyond the electric's reach, was the face of Josephine Maxim,—now drawn in agony, now pale but resolute, now white and still, with closed eyes, and yet again as he had seen it that night in his automobile. These visions made his throat ache; but there was comfort in the thought that his hand had been released from its paralyzing spell at this juncture, for to get Maxim on the scene at the earliest possible moment was of prime importance.

The scream of flanges against a curve announced the approach to Tunnel No. 10. Bland drew his watch. When the Pathfinder dived into the gaping hole like a hunted rat the second hand was seven points past the minute. When she emerged the hand was on thirty. The tunnel was half a mile long, plus seven feet. Thus the indicated speed was a trifle less than eighty miles an hour,—not bad considering that the 209 was now climbing the glacis of the Tens and nosing about among the mesas for the easiest outlet.

**UNEXPECTEDLY**—as is the way with such things—came the supreme test of Jesse's nerve. Just as the engine plunged into a nameless canyon, so narrow that he could almost have touched its rutted walls with his hand, a man on the track flashed into view six or seven hundred feet ahead.

The chances were ten thousand to one that he would step off in time; yet only five or six seconds lay between him and annihilation. One of these was consumed by Jesse in emitting a screeching whistle blast. Two—three—four more passed, each reducing the intervening space by over a hundred feet. Then the wayfarer leaped nimbly to one side as the train thundered by.

Jesse smiled; for no panicky fear had made him close the throttle valve and apply the air—as had happened in the past. But his joy was short lived.

"That man was masked!" shouted Maxim.

The presence of a man on foot in this desolate spot was unusual. The presence of a masked man was suspicious. Both occupants of the cab scanned the track as if it was the Book of Fate. Three minutes passed, and Bland was breathing easier, when far ahead he spied a flame, waving to and fro in the stop signal. Instantly he shut off steam and slapped on the air. The heavy train still dashed forward, shaking the earth and spewing fire from each locked wheel. Each second seemed a minute; but at last, yielding to the titanic grip of the brakes, she stopped with a final shudder.

Watching the gangway for the expected robbers with drawn revolvers, the eyes of the two men glazed with amazement at the appearance of Josephine Maxim.

"Go on!" she panted. "Don't waste a second! I escaped an hour ago from Emilio Frontana. I don't know how near the gang is; but if they saw my signal and saw you stop they will know you picked me up and may shoot up the train. I'm Josephine Maxim—my father is Major Maxim—I—"

She sprang toward her father with a startled cry.

"Papa! You here! Firing this engine!" Maxim folded her in his arms and smudged her cheek with his grimy lips. "It's me!" he said, with a smile. "And there's another friend of yours."

She twisted her head about. "Jesse!" she gasped.

Bland smiled happily. But he was too busy with his levers at the moment to do more. As it was he was none too quick; for the wheels were just beginning to sing when a vengeful but harmless fusillade of shots crackled at the rear.

There was no time for Josephine's story,—at least for more than was told by her happy, glowing face as she mounted the fireman's seat,—for the Pathfinder, with labored breath, now began to scale the Little Tens, rooting viciously at the sharp grades, scampering over tall, steel-netted trestles like a squirrel, or girdling the bosoms of peaks on shelves that hung above abyssmal depths.

None too soon for the panting fireman came the long, serpentine coast down into the valley of the Neversink. Then, as they emerged from a cut, the masthead arc lights of the Tehachapi yards circled into view. A long, sonorous blast leaped from the throat of the 209, and in response the distance signal blinked from red to white. Switch lamps swarmed up from the ground like fireflies; switch points clicked and thumped under the engine's ponderous

tread; yard shanties, freight houses, and strings of boxcars narrowed the way. Then the brake shoes began to kiss the wheel treads more and more ardently, until Bland jammed the locomotive's drivers and brought the long train to rest—three minutes late.

**IN** the same instant Major Maxim's low but fervent voice floated across the comparatively quiet cab. "By the white-winged hosts of Heaven, Josie, that man is an engineer!"

Bland flushed; but the little speech he had framed for Josephine was never spoken. As a result of Conductor Billings' message from White Pigeon, the railroad population of Tehachapi had gathered in a body at the station, and they greeted the Pathfinder with a shout. At Josephine's appearance in the gangway a second and louder shout went up. Carey, the burly division superintendent, leaped into the cab, wrung Jesse's hand, and then passed him down to the "boys." About the same time the passengers, full of curiosity and all kinds of exaggerated rumors, came flocking forward, bent on shaking hands with the heroes of the cab.

Finally, however, after the relief engine had hooked on, the "Aboard!" was sounded, and the Pathfinder, with fluttering hands and handkerchiefs at every vestibule, began another lap of her ocean-to-ocean race. Carey was summoned to the trainmaster's office, and Josephine, her father, and Bland found themselves comparatively alone.

Jesse, uncertain of his exact status, experienced a bad quarter of a minute; but Josephine came to his rescue by slipping one hand under his arm and the other under her father's, and starting them for the hotel.

As Maxim, still the color of a dorky, was registering for the trio, Josephine said, with a suspiciously bright eye:

"Jesse, I guess that serpent is dead. And—oh, how splendidly you killed it! Poor Papa, in spite of his half-broken back, gave me the story bit by bit."

Bland surveyed her gravely. "Yes, the serpent is dead. I'm a man again." He glanced at the Major's broad back, still at the desk, and added quickly, "Josephine, am I the kind of man whose serpents you would be willing to lend a hand in killing all along the path of life?"

For the first time he saw her steady eyes waver and fall. "If you are sure I can do it," she answered softly.



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## Burning Up Money

**T**HE manner in which some of our most cherished illusions are being destroyed in this modern age is truly distressing. But there are ever so many of them we can get along without very comfortably; as, for instance, that which Roy Norton disposes of in an article in our next SUNDAY MAGAZINE.

Most of us are firmly convinced that when it comes to spendthrifts Americans have no equals in the world. As a matter of fact, it appears that our most earnest, enthusiastic, and conscientious spenders are in the kindergarten class compared with foreigners. In "burning up money" it seems that we hold precedence because our spendthrifts throw their money about in a highly spectacular fashion. They insist that the money they burn makes a big blaze that everybody can see.

**IN THE ART OF BEING A SPENDTHRIFT**, which leads our next number, Mr. Norton makes this distinction perfectly clear. He proves that our most reckless disbursers of money don't begin to compare with those abroad, and so far as the art of throwing it right and left is concerned, they haven't even the faintest conception of it. For many years we have taken it for granted that Paris would go bankrupt if it was not for the millions that Americans spend there each year. It seems not to be true at all.

Mr. Norton doesn't stop there in toppling over our beliefs. He says that Paris is not the place to study spendthrifts, because there are at least four other capitals in Europe where money is thrown away much more extravagantly, and in one of these there is far heavier gambling than in Monte Carlo.

Altogether this is an amazing article, which will make you open your eyes very wide and gasp for breath.

**WHERE NATURE BUNGLES** is another article that destroys a few perfectly established illusions. It is one of the illuminating productions by Dr. Edwin F. Bowers, who gives us so much scientific knowledge in such a fascinating way. Some folk who feel themselves particularly wise strenuously maintain that when we are ill the best thing we can do is to leave it to Nature to make things right.

This may be true when it comes to medicine; but in any condition that calls for surgery it appears that Nature is one of the stupidest bunglers that ever were. She patches up makeshifts along the line of least resistance, and the victim suffers. In showing how the surgeon overcomes the blunders of Nature, Dr. Bowers describes one of the most remarkable operations ever performed,—the transfer of a good knee from one human being to another. It is difficult to credit; but it is absolutely authenticated. It is possible through the discovery that the cell life in our bodies lives long after we are dead. In fact, these cells can, by transfer, be made to live forever. It really looks as if the time was coming when surgeons could remake the whole human body.

**YOU** will find in our next number a story that is valuable simply because it is a good story. It is one of Morgan Robertson's romances of the sea. It is called **THE THIRD MATE**, and the plot turns upon a matter of longitude that has proved very useful to writers.

**THERE** is also **TORN ACROSS**, the serial by Henry Kitchell Webster, which marches faster as it proceeds, until the mystery gets so puzzling you are prepared to give up trying to solve it. Usually it is better to wait for the author to do that.



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